

SEWARD, HALE AND BROWN.

The alleged complicity of Seward and Hale with Ossawatimie Brown in his late foray, is a matter of great interest to the public. We therefore give our readers the following article from the *Louisville Journal*, in which the testimony of Forbes, on this subject, is reproduced and argued skillfully and pointedly:

MR. SEWARD'S COGNIZANCE OF THE BROWN CONSPIRACY.—It seems to us impossible to credit the letters of Forbes which we published in the *Journal* of yesterday without believing Mr. Seward to be guilty of a degree of privity in the scheme of Brown and his confederates which must damn him utterly as a statesman and which ought to damn him as a man. We can come to no other conclusion. With respect to the credibility of the letters of Forbes, when it is remembered that they were written or purport to have been written considerably upwards of a year ago, in the course, moreover, of a correspondence which from its very nature excluded all thought of publicity, there appears to be very little room for doubt. Alas! too little. We can perceive no motive for falsehood to which Forbes was accessible in the writing of the letters. Nor are any such motives indicated or imputed by others. The substantial accuracy of the letters is not debilitated. And, we repeat, if they are true, Mr. Seward is and deserves to be a ruined man, politically and personally; he is worthy of nothing better than scorn in any relation. For what are the facts as laid open in the letters of Forbes? The subject is important enough to warrant their reproduction here. We invite the honest and sterling masses of the Republicans of the North to scrutinize them.

Writing from Washington, on the 6th of May, 1858, to Dr. S. G. Howe, of Boston, Forbes says: "On Saturday (1st May) I had an interview with Senator William H. Seward, of New York, having been introduced to him through a letter from a leading Abolitionist, Dr. Bailey, of the Era. I went fully into the whole matter, in all its bearings. He expressed regret that he had been told, and said that he in his position ought not to have been informed of the circumstances. In part I agree with him, and in part I differ. I regret that the misconduct of the New Englanders should have forced me to address myself to him; but being now enlightened on the subject, he cannot well let this business continue in its present crooked condition, instead of causing it to be 'put straight,' both as regards my children's situation as well as the cotton speculation of the humanitarians.

Having made several ineffectual attempts to get a quiet conversation with Senator John P. Hale, of New Hampshire, I met him accidentally on Sunday morning. I could not then enter into the details of John Brown's project; therefore I confined myself to explaining the urgency of sending relief to my family."

In a letter written from Washington to Dr. Howe eight days after this, however, Forbes, whose own plan was the organizing of "a series of stampedes of slaves," along "the Northern slave frontier," finds opportunity to unfold "the details of John Brown's project" to his correspondent as follows:

"He proposed, with some twenty-five to fifty (colored and white mixed) well armed, and bringing a quantity of spare arms, to beat up a slave quarter in Virginia. To this I objected that, no preparatory notice having been given to the slaves, (no notice could with prudence be given them), the invitation to rise might, unless they were already in a state of agitation, meet with no response, or a feeble one. To this he replied that he was sure of a response. He calculated that he could get on the first night from 200 to 500. Half or thereabouts of this first lot he proposed to keep with him, mounting 100 or 80 of them, and make a dash at Harper's Ferry manufactory, destroying what he could not carry off. The other men not of his party were to be subdivided into three, four or five distinct parties, each under two or three of the original band, and would beat up other slave quarters, whence more men would be sent to join him.

He argued that, were he pressed by the United States troops, which after a few days might concentrate, he could easily maintain himself in the Alleghenies, and that his New England friends would, in the meantime call a Northern convention to restore tranquility and overthrow the pro-slavery Administration. This, I contended, could at most be a mere local explosion. A slave insurrection, being from the very nature of things deficient in men of education and experience, would, under such a system as Brown proposed, be either a flash in the pan, or would leap beyond his control or any control—when it would become a scene of mere anarchy, and would assuredly be suppressed.

On the other hand, B. considered foreign intervention as not impossible. As to the dream of a Northern convention, I consider it as a total fallacy. Brown's New England friends would not have the courage to show themselves, so long as the issue was doubtful.

After days of discussion, Brown (who, you reiterate underlined in your letter of the 10th, enjoys your entire confidence) acquiesced or feigned to acquiesce in a mixed project styled "the well matured plan." I consented to make that concession to secure mutual co-operation, and in consideration of the prospective Committee of Management, which was at the proper time to be established. I preferred, however, my original plan of stampedes, unalloyed by anything else. Your assertion that I want to take the management is wholly unfounded; my insisting upon a Committee of Management is conclusive on that head. John Brown, had he been truthful, might have been useful in some capacity; almost every one might, if zealous, be useful in some place, whereas the same man might be mischievous in another place. This mixed plan, in which I am compromised more than you (lying, as you do, out of sight,) having been definitely settled upon, I deny the right of B., or you, or any one, from caprice or speculation, to set it aside for the Brown project, pure and simple, or for any other. It is a breach of confidence that I will not tolerate, especially when your first act is to assail my own family. You must be worse than insane—you must

be deprived—to expect it of me. Now, however, after what has passed, I would not undertake the intended mixed plan or even my own project of stampedes in connection with any of you, because I can place no more faith in New England humanitarians.

My first thought after discovering Brown's complicity in the New England breach of faith was—let him try. Though justly irritated at the horrible treatment of my family, I did not till towards the end of April utter a syllable, even to Mr. Sanborn, which might tend to check the supplies. I spoke to but one Abolitionist after my arrival here, and he thought much as I did. On reconsidering the matter with other Abolitionists, they advanced such sound reasons that I conceived my first impression to have been erroneous, and they say that Brown must be stopped.

The more I reflect the more I become confirmed in the opinion of the last named Abolitionist. First, because a man who deviates from the truth, betrays his associate, and ill treats a friendly family, should not be trusted with any humanitarian enterprise. Second, because Brown, with his bigoted mind and limited instruction, has not the capacity necessary to direct such an enterprise. Third, because the crude project which he and his confederates have in their heads is not likely to succeed, but merely suited for a grand speculation in the sudden rise of cotton on the exchanges. Fourth, because some of the hands engaged by him are highly objectionable.

For these and many other reasons, I call on you and your associates to stop B. and to take from him your arms, &c. I have a right to exact this, and I do exact it. To your assertion that to stop B. I would denounce and betray, I echo what the Abolitionists here say, that if you do not, by taking from him your arms, &c., stop him, you betray them; for this concerns the Abolitionists, and they have a right to be heard.

It has been written that there is nothing new under the sun. The proverb is wrong—you have laid down a new doctrine, viz: he who stops a traitor, and so prevent his treason, betrays. Notwithstanding this new rule, I repeat that B. & Co. shall not speculate on the rise in cotton. Some may say, "Why not let them make a little money?—it won't harm the cause." I say it will, because prudence may demand that the initiative be unexpectedly hurried forward; or it may be essential that it be deferred some weeks, or even months; but speculation necessitates that the panic seize the market exactly on the preconceived day; therefore, to manufacture that fraudulent rise the ultimate success of the humanitarian move would, without scruple, be

so public spirited as to advance \$37,000, and \$8,000 to effect a tariff, in which the whole trade, and not that firm alone, was interested. The reply was that to a house having heavy speculations, it was well worth \$100,000 to get within a certain time a change of duties, which would enable the speculators to realize five or ten times that amount.

"Then the whole cotton scheme reappeared before me, and the recollection that Brown had told me that Mr. Amos Lawrence had promised him \$7,000 whenever actual hostilities should be commenced, brought to mind other reflections. This iniquitous speculation in human blood for the mere greediness of dollars shall somehow be stopped, though you coolly tell me that if I stop it I betray, because I will not let certain persons betray. To the Abolitionists I say, you must unite together and stop it; and to the colored people I say, If you rise at the call of New England humanitarians, you will shed your blood for the sole benefit of New England speculators, and the free colored people may very likely be re-enslaved."

The nature of the "cotton speculation" is more distinctly set forth in a previous letter to Dr. Howe in these terms:

Speculation is perhaps hardly the proper term by which to designate the proposals of John Brown to raise a sum by coming to an understanding with some mercantile house (which was to make its own profit also) by speculating on the principal English and American exchanges for the rise in cotton which would assuredly result from the diminution of the usual supply through our projected movement. I peremptorily refused to acquiesce, and the subject was not mooted again to me. But the discovery of the Boston \$87,000 affair in wool reminds me of John Brown's cotton scheme, and induces me to think that he is not the only New England humanitarian who entertains peculiar notions of speculation. Indeed, greediness to turn insurrection to pecuniary profit may not unreasonably be regarded as the grand motive for that projected movement south of Mason and Dixon's line, which movement I looked upon till lately as purely philanthropic. Judging of the probable march of future events by those past, I say to the colored people, as I and others have been duped, so will be the slaves, and if they rise at the call of New England humanitarians they will assuredly shed their blood for the sole profit of New England speculators."

We are now prepared to comprehend the general character and extent of the disclosures which Forbes made to Mr. Seward in the interview before mentioned. Forbes, it will be observed, had two separate and distinct grounds of complaint against the "humanitarians," as he somewhat loosely terms the Abolitionists, seeing that he is a man of culture and intelligence: namely, first, the necessitous condition of his family, consequent, as he alleged, on the failure of the "humanitarians" to redeem their engagements to him, and, secondly, the rejection of his plan by the perfidious "humanitarian," and their adoption of John Brown's project, including "the cotton speculation." These are the two grievances for the redress of which Forbes desired to enlist the favor and influence of Seward and Hale.

These are the crooked things which he wanted them to "put straight." The scope and force of the language in which he describes his respective interviews with them is now not only obvious but unmistakable. "Having made several ineffectual attempts" he says, to get a quiet conversation with Senator John P. Hale, of New Hampshire, I met him accidentally on Sunday morning. I could not then enter into the details of John Brown's project; therefore *I confined myself to explaining the urgency of sending relief to my family.*" He could touch upon only a part of his grievances. Not so in his more deliberate interview with Mr. Seward. In that he touched fully on the entire burden of his complaint. "*I went,*" he says, "*into the whole matter, in all its bearings.*" What, now, is left to inference or doubt? Assuming the genuineness of these developments, which we believe is not impeached even by the most nearly concerned, it is an offence to reason, an insult to common sense, a gross violence to the constitution of the human mind, to ask one to believe that Mr. Seward was not thoroughly cognizant of the bloody and demoniacal scheme which Old John Brown and his fellow conspirators were meditating. He did know it all. This conclusion is inevitable.

Mr. Seward knew it all; but most certainly he never told any part of it, unless he told it in guilty confidence. He kept the villainous secret but too well. Not the arch-conspirator Brown himself guarded the terrible mystery with more profound reserve. He concealed a traitor's plot with a traitor's vigilance. Granting that Mr. Seward's offence is nothing blacker than a criminal lack of courage to do his duty to society and to himself, yet how mean and contemptible is his position! *He*, the representative of the Empire State in the Halls of the Federal Councils, a Senator of the United States, the idol of a great party, a statesman, a citizen of the highest distinction, a Christian, and a gentleman, bends his ear to this tale of devilish conspiracy against the peace and lives of his fellow-citizens, and, admitting it with but a passing twinge of compunction, locks the atrocious scheme in his bosom, and goes forth, with impenetrable complacency, to lavish smiles and salutations on its appointed victims. Oh what a shame is this! It is deep enough to redden the cheeks of every citizen in the land. We do not say that a man or a human being capable of such foul recreancy, such abject, sinful weakness, is not fit to live; but we do say that he is not fit to associate on terms of equality or on any terms with honest men.

If Mr. Seward cannot vindicate himself from this damning revolution, and we do not see how he can, let him, we say, be expelled from the Senate, which he dishonors, and spurned from society, which he at once endangers and disgraces. The statesman who either from cowardice or ambition has consented to become the custodian of a traitor's secret has forfeited all title not only to the confidence but even to the recognition of his countrymen. Let him be branded with the mark of Cain, and scourge from the haunts and hearts of men.